2.17 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulative considerable? ("Cumulative considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☒	☐	☐

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE DISCUSSION

The proposed project consists of the extension of an underground transmission power cable from the Potrero switchyard to the Hunters Point switchyard in the City of San Francisco. Three alternatives have been evaluated in this analysis, varying by route or configuration (see **Figure 1-2** of the *Project Description*). For purposes of this mandatory analysis, all of the action alternatives are considered to have a very similar level of effect when judged against these global determinations, except where noted below. Additionally, the "no project" alternative (Alternative 4) was evaluated and is not expected to result in any impacts related to these criteria, although there is some possibility that if the cable (or alternative solution) is not installed, there could be system reliability issues which could lead to service disruptions and the decommissioning of the Hunters Point Power Plant could be postponed, leading to continued environmental impacts in either or both cases.

CHECKLIST IMPACT CONCLUSIONS

a) As described in Section 2.1, the proposed project does not have the potential to result in potentially significant unavoidable impacts related to the visual quality of the area. Alternative 3 does result in significant impacts of visual quality due to the overhead cable and associated towers to be constructed across Islais Creek.

As described in Section 2.3, the proposed project and alternatives have the potential to result in several potentially significant impacts primarily related to short-term construction related air emissions which have some potential to degrade the quality of the environment. Mitigation measures contained in each of the subject resource area descriptions are considered adequate to reduce these individual impacts to a less than significant level.

As described in the Section 2.4 Biological Resources, the project does not have the potential to substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife species population to drop below self sustaining levels, nor does it restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal community, or reduce the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal.

Section 2.5 Cultural Resources concludes that the project and alternatives have some potential to eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or pre-history; but the mitigation measures imposed in the section would reduce the potential to a less than significant level. No direct impacts to known cultural resources would occur during construction of the project. There are no known areas of cultural significance located within the proposed or alternative routes. The closest site is **CA-SFr-15,** a Nelson shellmound site, located at a quarter-mile southwest to the proposed project. Unknown cultural resources, however, could be exposed during trench excavation activities. An on-site monitor would be present during all excavation activities and a specific protocol has been established to deal with undiscovered resources. As a result, no impact to cultural resources is anticipated.

b) The proposed project impacts include the potential for an accidental release of hazardous materials stored in staging areas and used during the construction of the proposed project that could enter nearby waterways, adjacent lands or public roadways. There is the potential for exposure to contaminated soil and groundwater from existing and unidentified contamination that might be encountered during excavation and/or dewatering activities. With the mitigation measures provided in **Section 2.07**, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, the proposed project would not have environmental effects that could cause adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

Electricity transmission or use can generate EMF's, which are caused by the presence and motion of electric charges. Over the past several years, media reports on potential EMF exposure from power lines have generated much public interest and concern. Mitigation measures, including the incorporation of EMF reduction measures in accordance with CPUC Decision 93-11-013, are included in **Section 2.07**, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials.* As a result, the impacts are less than significant.

Additionally, the project could provide for a more efficient energy delivery system in San Francisco and provide additional means for the retirement of the Potrero Power Plant Project, which would be a beneficial impact on the environment.

c) The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15130(a)) require a discussion of the cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is "cumulatively considerable," meaning that the project's incremental effects are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects. The CEQA Guidelines note that the cumulative impacts discussion does not need to provide as much detail as is provided in the analysis of project-only impacts and should be guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness.

In addition, Section 15130(b) of the CEQA Guidelines identifies that the following three elements are necessary for an adequate cumulative analysis:

- A list of past, present, and reasonably anticipated future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including those projects outside the control of the Lead Agency (i.e., the list approach); or a summary of projections contained in an adopted General Plan or related planning document designed to evaluate regional or area-wide conditions (i.e., the plan approach). This information is provided in Table 2.17-1.

- A summary of expected environmental effects to be produced by those projects. The summary shall include specific reference to additional information stating where that information is available. This information is provided in Table 2.17-1.

- A reasonable analysis of the cumulative impacts of the relevant projects, and an examination of reasonable options for mitigating or avoiding any significant cumulative effects of a Proposed Project.

The cumulative projects considered in this analysis are provided in Table 2.17-1. These projects range from residential and commercial developments, light rail and inter-modal facilities, to other utility projects. These projects have been brought forth through applications or pre-application meetings. Five of the projects listed may be built during a similar timeframe as the proposed project. It is reasonable to assume that construction of a number of these projects may coincide with the proposed project.

In its PEA for the proposed project, PG&E states that it anticipates construction of the proposed project to begin on or before April 1, 2005 and extend through a nine month period. PG&E evaluated projects within a half mile area on either side of the preferred alignment. Additional analysis was conducted by ESA to evaluate all applicable projects within the area of the preferred and alternative alignments. A variety of entities were contacted for information on projects within their jurisdictional purview. The development, utility improvement, and capital investment projects are listed below:

- City and County of San Francisco, Department of Public Works
- City and County of San Francisco, Planning Department
- San Francisco Municipal Railway
- San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
- Hetch Hetchy Water and Power
- Port of San Francisco

In conjunction with the proposed project and alternatives, several short-term construction related cumulative impacts may occur. These potential impacts include impacts to cultural resources, hazardous materials, noise and traffic. Each is described in detail below.

- Implementation of the proposed project, as described in the Cultural Resources section of this report (Section 2.5), has the potential to result in the disturbance of undiscovered cultural resources. In conjunction with the other projects considered in the cumulative scenario, it is possible that the project could contribute to a significant cumulative impact. It is unlikely, however, that the trenching associated with the proposed project or alternatives would uncover a major cultural find, especially in previously disturbed areas. Nonetheless, a full time on site monitor will be present during construction, to address unanticipated discoveries. It is probable that all other cumulative projects will have similar requirements. Resources are protected by the State Historic Preservation Officer in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act. These factors lead to a determination that cumulative impacts associated with the project are less-than significant.

- As described in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials Section of this report (Section 2.7) a number potential hazardous sites have been identified along the preferred alignment and alternatives through research of existing regulatory lists of these sites. Other construction projects in the area also have the potential to be effected by hazardous sites in the area. The proposed project, in conjunction with the cumulative project scenario, could result in significant cumulative impacts if adequate mitigation is not required for each project. Excavated and stored material could contain hazardous waste that could present risks to construction workers, the public or the environment if not handled according to a specific protocol. The mitigation measures are outlined in Hazards and Hazardous Materials Section, in addition to the codified requirements of state and federal law. With the implementation of the mitigations and safety protocol for this project (as well as others in the cumulative scenario) impacts are determined to be less-than-significant.

- Construction equipment used to install the proposed project will temporarily increase short-term noise levels in the project area. This project, in conjunction with the other projects listed on Table 2.17-1 has the potential to contribute to a cumulative impact o noise levels in the project area. Mitigation measures specified in the Noise Section will reduce the significant noise effects associates with the proposed project to a level of less than significant. Since it is unlikely that all activities will occur in the same area at one time, noise increases will be dispersed and a significant cumulative noise impact will not occur.

- Traffic flow in the project area will be disrupted by this project during construction. Street, lane and sidewalk closures may be required. In conjunction with other construction on projects in the area, potential cumulative impacts could occur. As specified in Traffic and Transportation, Section 2.15. the Applicant has committed to the preparation of a Traffic Management Plan prior to construction. This plan is subject to the approval of the City of San Francisco. Other cumulative projects will be required to adhere to the requirements set forth in the City of San Francisco Excavation and Special Traffic Permits, leading to a determination that significant cumulative impacts will not occur.

GENERATION AND TRANSMISSION CUMULATIVE PROJECTS

As shown on Table 2.17-1, power generation projects are planned for the City of San Francisco as part of a long-term initiative to meet growing power needs and increase reliability (SFPUC 2002). For example, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission plans to install three low-emission combustion turbines to replace the Hunters Point Power Plant adjacent to the Potrero Power Plant Switchyard. The natural gas fueled generators are to be used to meet peak demand and to provide emergency back-up power for critical facilities. The generators are 52 megawatt natural gas fueled combustion turbines, or "peakers," and are limited in their operation to 10 percent of the hours in a year by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District as diesel fuel produces many times more pollutants than natural gas. The installation and operation of these combustion turbines is considered a key component by the City in decommissioning the Hunters Point Power Plant.

Currently, all of the in-City power plants are located in the southeast sector. To address this environmental justice issue, in July 1998, the City and County of San Francisco entered into an agreement with PG&E to close the Hunters Point Power Plant when it is no longer needed to sustain electric reliability in San Francisco. PG&E cannot permanently close the plant until authorized by the ISO and FERC. The ISO has developed special criteria for planning the design of San Francisco's electric system. These criteria assume simultaneous outages of multiple system components. Within one year of permanent shutdown, PG&E has agreed to expeditiously decommission the plant and remediate the site. Since this agreement between the City and PG&E, the utility has shut down the two oldest units at Hunters Point (Units 2 and 3) and converted them to synchronous condensers to provide needed voltage support to the transmission grid (SFPUC 2002).

There are two planned transmission projects that can help alleviate San Francisco's reliability and capacity shortage problems. A planned upgrade to the San Mateo-Martin #4 60 kV to 115kV line, which currently serves San Francisco is scheduled for 2004 and could bring as much as 100 megawatts (MW) of new capacity. The proposed Jefferson-Martin transmission line is planned for completion in the fall of 2005 and will add up to 350 MW. However, approvals for right-of-way through several Peninsula communities may cause significant delays. While the construction of both of these transmission projects would facilitate the closure of Hunters Point, any problems in the development of the Jefferson – Martin project would delay the closure (SFPUC 2002).

TABLE 2.17-1
PLANNED AND PROPOSED PROJECTS WITHIN 0.5 MILE OF THE PROJECT AREA

Project	Address/Location	Description	Size (Acres)	Status [1]	Anticipated Construction Schedule	
					Begin	End
City and County of San Francisco, Public Works Department						
Street Construction Coordination Center 5 Year Plan Projects	Various Locations	Paving, sewer, and various street improvements projects by the San Francisco Water Department, Underground Planning Department, Department of Parking and Traffic, and PacBell Repairs.	N/A [2]	A	September 2004	July 2005
San Francisco Municipal Railroad						
Third Street Light Rail Project	Third Street from Visitacion Valley to Chinatown	Two-Phase project to construct 7.1 miles of new light rail, 20 surface stations, and 4 subway stations.	N/A	U	2001	Phase I: Spring 2005 Phase 2: INA
Metro East Light Rail Maintenance and Operations Facility	Parcel bounded by 25th, Illinois Cesar Chavez, and Maryland Streets	Construction of facility for storage, maintenance, and operation of light rail vehicles. Will consist of construction of an initial 13-acre site that will be expanded.	17	A	Spring 2004	2007
Port of San Francisco						
Illinois Street Intermodal Bridge	Illinois Street across Islais Creek Channel (between Marin Street and Amador Street)	Construction of an intermodal bridge that will connect the Port's northern container terminal (Pier 80) on the northern bank of Islais Creek with the southern container terminals (Pier 90 through 92, Pier 94 through 96, and Backlands). Reconfiguration of railroads tracks on Cargo Way to accommodate increase rail traffic in conjunction with the intermodal bridge.	N/A	A	July 2004 or before	December 2006
Pacific Cement	Amador Street near Pier 92	Construction of a fully enclosed concrete batch plant.	3.0	INA	INA	INA
RMC Pacific Materials	Pier 80	Construction of a ready-mix concrete plant, maintenance shop, parking, and truck wash stations. This facility will replace the one located at Third and Mariposa Streets.	3.1	INA	INA	INA

TABLE 2.17-1 (Continued)
PLANNED AND PROPOSED PROJECTS WITHIN 0.5 MILE OF THE PROJECT AREA

Project	Address/Location	Description	Size (Acres)	Status [1]	Anticipated Construction Schedule	
					Begin	End
San Francisco Petroleum	Adjacent to Illinois Street Bridge at Pier 90	Construction of marine fueling facility with possibility for City truck and vehicle fueling.	0.5	PL	INA	INA
Bode Gravel/Mission Valley Rock	Pier 92 at the east end of Amador Street	Construction of a ready-mix concrete plant and associated marine terminal to import aggregate materials.	8.5	INA	INA	INA
Pier 70 Development	Maritime Reserve East of Illinois Street between 18th and 21st Streets	Development of new maritime, maritime support, and general industry uses totaling 400,000 square feet within the 55-acre reserve. Development of a 16-acre site for commercial office and/or research and development space, retail space, and public access and recreational maritime uses totaling 950,000 square feet.	9.2	INA	INA	INA
Pier 90–94 Backlands Development	Northeast of Cargo Way	Development of a 50-acre site for a mix of light industrial and commercial/office/ research and development uses.	37.9	INA	INA	INA
Coach USA	Pier 96	Construction of a fuel island, diesel fuel storage tank, and bus washer in association with the conversion of an existing building and paved storage yard into an ancillary office space, and bus storage, maintenance, and repair facility.	8	INA	INA	INA
British Pacific Aggregate	Hansen Aggregate Terminal at Pier 94	Construction of storage facility for the waterborne importation of construction aggregates. May also include erection of portable ready-mix concrete plant and/or asphalt plant facilities on a semi-permanent basis.	10	A	INA	INA

TABLE 2.17-1 (Continued)
PLANNED AND PROPOSED PROJECTS WITHIN 0.5 MILE OF THE PROJECT AREA

Project	Address/Location	Description	Size (Acres)	Status [1]	Anticipated Construction Schedule	
					Begin	End
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission						
Turbine installation	Adjacent to Potrero Switchyard	Installation of three turbine engines with a total 200-megawatt capacity.	4.5	PL	INA	September 2005
City and County of San Francisco, Planning Department						
Residential development	Various locations	Miscellaneous one- to four-story buildings with one or two residential dwelling units.	INA	INA	INA	INA
Lofts	603 Tennessee Street	Demolish existing two-story warehouse, construct 12 unit, two-story live/work lofts	INA	INA	INA	INA
Residential Building	25 Sierra Street	Four-story, 67-unit residential building with office and retail space.	INA	INA	INA	INA
Mixed Use Building 1	1275 Indiana Street	Five-story residential/retail/warehouse building	INA	INA	INA	INA
Mixed Use Building 2	1301 Indiana Street	Five-story residential/retail/warehouse building	INA	INA	INA	INA
Retail Building	491 Bayshore Boulevard	Demolish two existing retail buildings and erect new three-story building for retail and material sales.	INA	INA	INA	INA
Retail/Office Building	1000 17th Street	Four-story retail/office building	INA	INA	INA	INA

[1] Status encompasses the following categories:
U = The project is under construction.
A = The local authority or lead agency has formally approved the project.
P = The project is pending in the formal application review process.
PL = The project is planned; proponents have not initiated the formal approval process.
INA = Information is not available.

[2] Not applicable (N/A)

REFERENCES – Mandatory Findings of Significance

Essex Environmental. December 2003. PG&E Potrero to Hunters Point 115 kV Cable Project Proponent's Environmental Assessment.

San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. 2002. The Electricity Resource Plan. December 2002.

San Francisco Planning Department. 2004. Information regarding proposed projects and reports. July 2004.